

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Congresswoman Loretta Sanchez (CA-47) today questioned key military officials during a House Armed Services Committee (HASC) hearing on the operations of U.S. Central Command, U.S. Special Operations Command, and U.S. Transportation Command. As Chair of the HASC subcommittee with jurisdiction over U.S. Special Operations Forces, Rep. Sanchez was particularly interested in Gen. Stanley McChrystal's recent decision to bring these forces under his direct control.

"On Tuesday, the New York Times reported that General McChrystal was bringing our Special Operations Forces under his command, in part because of a string of civilian casualties in Afghanistan," said Rep. Sanchez. "General Petraeus reassured me that General McChrystal's decision was motivated by his desire to unify control over the U.S.'s military operations. He is eliminating a potential source of disorganization in the field, not penalizing our Special Operations Forces."

Rep. Sanchez was also concerned that the majority of Special Operations Forces are in Central Command (CENTCOM), potentially limiting operations elsewhere in the world.

"Currently, eighty-six percent of our deployed Special Operations Forces are being sent to CENTCOM operations," Rep. Sanchez continued. "I am concerned that this disproportionate use of our forces will limit operations elsewhere in the world. Admiral Olson, the U.S. Special Operations Commander, confirmed this fear, stating that our Special Operations Forces are constantly being relocated at the expense of their ability to develop regional expertise."

U.S. Special Operations Command forces deploy and operate in more than 70 countries to defend the United States and its interests by coordinating global operations against terrorist networks. The U.S. Special Operations Forces are essential to the United States' overall mission to deter, disrupt and dismantle terrorist networks. One of Rep. Sanchez's ongoing concerns has been that these forces have been overextended, participating in operations in Iraq, Afghanistan, and other parts of the world.

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